

The Baptist Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

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In Somalia . . .

Penetrating questions launch spiritual odyssey

ORLANDO, Fla. (BP) — Two questions asked by six Somalis in three different locations in Ethiopia caused unrest in the soul of a Southern Baptist relief coordinator working in Somalia.

Thus an astounding spiritual odyssey began, the relief coordinator told a group of Southern Baptists meeting in Orlando for the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Somalia in 1990 was a mess. Malnutrition was 87% among the general population. Death was a daily companion to food distribution, as those who died during the night had to be buried before those who survived the night could be fed.

At the height of the famine, a handful of Southern Baptist volunteers and relief workers provided food, medical assistance, fresh water, and shelter for 50,000 persons in 10 refugee centers and 27 villages in three countries. And for every pound of food delivered, there seemed to be a ton of weapons being used by children and gunmen — pawns of the infamous warlords of Somalia.

The workers had enough to do! But enough apparently wasn't enough.

Reports began to filter in about 1 million-plus Somalis dwelling in the desert region of Ethiopia, far from the CNN cameras and international concern. Research showed that an evangelical presence was last felt in that region in 1972 when a Presbyterian agriculturalist was martyred during the Ogaden War between Somalia and Ethiopia.

While 77 relief agencies were working in and out of Mogadishu, the capital of Somalia, only two were bringing any type of aid to a million people in the Ogaden who were perishing at high rates because of famine and civil war.

If people die in the desert and no one is there to hear their cries, do they actually make any noise? The world's response made it seem they did not.

But an uneasiness fell upon the Somali relief team in October 1992 that caused them to think again of the Ogaden region. Reason after reason was given for not going — more couldn't be done; ministries were demanding 18-hour days in three countries; just getting to the Ogaden would take three days by chartered flights from Nairobi, Kenya. Who could

take a relief representative there? What about food, water, transport? Literally dozens of reasons existed for not going.

And only one for going — the Spirit of God would not allow the workers to make excuses. He said "Go."

December 1992 saw a Baptist relief worker board a series of planes — in frustrated obedience — for the Ogaden. Miraculously, another Baptist worker in Ethiopia had made it possible for the relief worker to help a United Nations team on a survey trip to the area.

Miraculously, and practically on the way to the airport, another Christian working in Somalia came by with a strange "non-request."

In 1990, six Somali Christians were forced to flee Somalia into the Ogaden. For more than two years no one across the country of Somalia had heard from them. One was the poor African country. Wary Somalis on the streets of the country's reported to have cities (below) have learned to stay alert to their surroundings, lest they fall been shot. All victim to the violence all around them. (BP photos by Mark Sandlin)

The small Somali Christian community had prayed for them daily for two years. They had heard that the Baptist relief worker was visiting the region.

Believing it would be impossible to find six believers out of a million Muslims in an area larger than the state of Kentucky, the "non-request" was: "We know you could never find these six men. We don't know if they're alive or not. Just do this. Take their names that we have written on this card and, as you travel through the Ogaden, ask God to protect them if they are anywhere near."

The card went into the Baptist relief worker's pocket and the trip began.

Traveling to the Ogaden, he told UN personnel, "No, I've never been there. No, I know no one there. No, no one knows I'm coming."

Days of desert travel followed as surveys were accomplished

and truck loads and camel and donkey trains of food were sent out to the worst-hit famine areas.

In the course of events, the relief worker began a friendship with his Muslim driver, "Mohammed," who just "happened" to be a refugee from Somalia. Mohammed just "happened" to have worked in Somalia with the Christian relief worker who just "happened" to have given the Baptist relief worker a

and stood near the table gazing at the American.

"Can I help you?" the American finally asked.

"You have come. You are the one," the Somali replied and walked out.

Fifteen minutes later two more Somali men walked in and the scene was repeated.

"You are the one. You have come."

Ten more minutes passed and three additional Somalis entered and in Somali said, "God has sent you. You have come."

By now the UN workers were a bit bewildered. "We thought you didn't know anyone."

"I don't."

"Then who are these men?"

"I don't have a clue!"

"What do they mean by this, 'You are the one. You have come' non-sense?"

"I don't have a clue." But he found out.

In October 1992, six Somali believers, scattered in three different locations in the desert of Ethiopia, independently of each other, prayed a simple prayer.

"God," they cried out, "is this Jesus that we believed in years ago real? Is he really who we were told he was? And if he is God, do any of the Christians know we are still alive? Does anyone care?"

From three different locations in Ethiopia they prayed and they said the Holy Spirit told them to travel to a certain town in the Ogaden and await his answer for them.

Meanwhile in Somalia, hundreds of miles away, Baptist relief workers became troubled and sent one of their own to the Ogaden by way of Nairobi, Kenya.

Later that day the Baptist relief worker was understandably apprehensive as he was surrounded by these six men in the local market. They said that the driver had told of his coming.

They related they had "spied" on him as he did his morning devotions, said grace over meals, and as he worked among refugees. They had met, prayed, and decided that he was the one God had promised to send.

"Was he the one?" they asked. "Could he answer their questions: 'Is Jesus real?' and 'Do any of the believers from Somalia care or pray or remember?'"

One of the six men had been shot three times through the face. Two had lost all of their family. All had suffered terribly for their faith. They couldn't even meet together because of local persecution.

They waited for an answer. The relief worker told of his pilgrimage of faith in Jesus to Somalia, through Kenya to Ethiopia.

"Jesus is exactly who you have believed him to be," the worker stated. "He is trustworthy and the Lord of all creation."

Then reaching into his pocket he pulled out a card. On that card were the six names of the men standing before him!

"Read the names on this card," he instructed. The six Somalis looked in puzzlement as they read their names.

"Where and how did you get our names?" they asked.

"Your family in Christ remembers, cares, and prays daily for you," the relief worker replied as he related the history of the card.

The men embraced him, overcome with emotion.

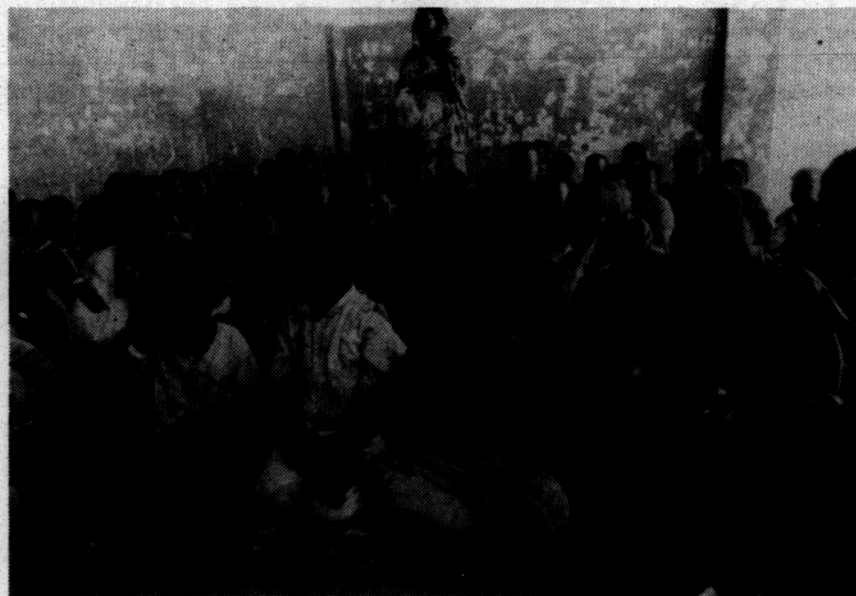
Shot, persecuted, scattered, afraid but faithful, these six men praised God for his goodness and grace toward them. They did not ask to leave the desert or to be resettled to a safe place. They just wanted to know if Jesus was real and if anyone cared or remembered to pray.

The relief worker flew back to Nairobi a week later carrying letters from the believers in the Ogaden to the believers in Somalia and Kenya.

One letter contained a phrase that would stay with him forever.

"To the family of Christ in Kenya. Thank you for sending our brother to us. As the Ethiopian eunuch awaited the coming of Philip, so did we wait. To us he appeared as from the sky and he left in the same manner. God is good. Remember our faith. Come when you can."

"You have come. You are the one."



Hungry for relief — Scores of children in Mogadishu (above) and across the country of Somalia have become parentless during the extended period of unrest, violence, anarchy, and starvation that have gripped them. One was the poor African country. Wary Somalis on the streets of the country's reported to have cities (below) have learned to stay alert to their surroundings, lest they fall been shot. All victim to the violence all around them. (BP photos by Mark Sandlin)

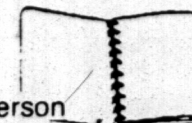


card with six names on it.

Mohammed, it would turn out, just "happened" to know someone else.

On or about the sixth day in the Ogaden, the Baptist relief worker was eating the noon meal in a hut with the UN workers.

A tall Somali man with a mishapened face entered the hut



Pastor, what is this controversy?

If you haven't asked the question yet, perhaps you've been tempted. "Nothing but a few preachers squabbling over theology" has been the stock answer. Now it has gone beyond that. Lay people, the WMU, Sunday School, and perhaps most of all, budgetary matters are affected. What is the pastor to say to his people? What are the members to believe? Eventually the SBC controversy will be in your church. What will your answer when the questions are offered?

There are at least two sides to every story. You can get books representing these two major divisions. James C. Hefley's *The Truth in Crisis* gives a fundamental/conservative view. *The Takeover* by Rob James offers a moderate/conservative view. In between, you have Grady Cothen and *What Happened to the SBC?*, Franklin Paschall's *Identity Crisis in the Church: The Southern Baptist Convention Controversy*, Baptist Battles by Nancy T. Ammerman, Bill Leonard's *God's Last and Only Hope: The Fragmentation of the SBC*, and Walter Shurden's *Not a Silent People: Controversies that Have Shaped Southern Baptists*. Also, David Dockery's *Southern Baptists and American Evangelicals* is good background material. Of course, there are many other books, dozens of news magazines, and countless articles. If you are going to confront the controversy, face it with all the knowledge you can find.

The Baptist Record has sought to present both sides. Extremists say we have failed in this. None the less we will contin-

ue to try to keep our people aware of the total denominational picture. Neutrality is a difficult position to maintain.

Kenny Mahanes of Dayton, Ohio said: "Neutrality is risky. At least if one side is chosen, he only loses half his friends. If he remains neutral, he risks losing all of them."

If the fundamental/conservatives win, it will be a lose-lose situation. If the moderate/conservatives win, it will be a lose-lose situation. The only hope for a win-win is the effort for negotiation and the seeking of reconciliation.

Controversy over truth and error is certainly not new. There was a perceived "liberal drift" of the SBC that rose to new heights in 1962 when Ralph Elliott's *The Message of Genesis* was published. People were concerned and the battle for the Bible continued over the next two decades.

Finally Paul Pressler, Houston appeals court judge, began a study of the SBC constitution. Pressler and others discovered the SBC president named the powerful Committee on Committees, which nominates the Committee on Nominations, which appoints trustees to the various boards, agencies, and other SBC entities. Both the Committee on Nominations and their nominees are approved by the Convention.

Beginning in 1979 the process started; fundamental/conservatives nominated only fundamental/conservatives and within a few short years the conservative resurgence or the "takeover" was complete. Competent or not, nearly every trustee, committee, or board was

under control of the fundamental/conservative wing of the SBC. The inerrancy of the Scripture was the trumpet and the SBC drift toward liberalism was corrected.

However, they were now apparently unable to stop the force set in motion. The pendulum is hard to stop. The SBC was now drifting toward the right. The Jerry Falwells, Pat Robertsons, even J. Frank Norris's church in Fort Worth was now feeling at home in the SBC. Each elected president sought to be more zealous than the other, and through the '80s the moderate/conservatives put forth an alternate presidential candidate.

In 1980 Bailey Smith won 51.1% of the votes, in 1982 James Draper defeated Duke McCall, and so it continued. Grady Cothen, John Sullivan, James Pleitz, Winfred Moore, Richard Jackson, Dan Vestal and other capable leaders gained 40-49% of the votes but were unable to stop the fundamental/conservative march through history.

Fragmentation began in the '90s. There were several splinter groups, with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship (CBF) emerging as the strongest. It offered an alternate mission support plan, which many churches began to use.

The SBC discovered it controlled the national aspect of the SBC — the mission boards and the seminaries — but not most

state conventions. This has produced an arena of tension. State papers sought to publish both sides of the controversy, but SBC leaders wanted nothing positive said about CBF. SBC leaders have urged the CBF to pull out of the SBC and start a new denomination. The CBF has refused, and confirmed by word and gifts that it was part of the SBC. Now SBC, in a poor and petty moment, voted to instruct agencies and boards to receive no more CBF funds.

Some Observations

1. Most Baptists are biblically conservative. There may be a few who doubt the early chapters of Genesis or question the miracles, but most — I'd say 98% — believe the Bible to be the Word of God. Historically, that has been the Baptist position.

2. Extremism exacts a heavy toll. Programs, churches, and conventions pay a heavy price when the pendulum swings too far. We need to compromise where we can, and work together.

3. Baptists will support missions. Continued Cooperative Program support, record Lottie Moon offerings, and a \$12 million CBF mission budget attest to this fact. It would be best to have only one channel. However, if you cannot conscientiously support the one, then let's agree to have two. It's better this way than to lose CBF Baptists and dollars completely.

There are many areas overseas where we can cooperate with success.

This is the area where we hurt most in the local church. I've worked almost 40 years in a denominational post. I've witnessed the effectiveness of our world mission program, know the value of our seminaries, and appreciated the historical stand for freedom of Southern Baptists. It's a great denomination and I cannot turn away from it. I'll work as long as possible on the national and state levels, but always on the local church level.

4. There are some belligerent, militant people in the SBC and the CBF. They are not apt to change. However, there is a great host in the SBC willing to talk, to negotiate, to blaze a trail wherein we can walk together. The "old time religion" in one era caused the Baptists to love the Methodists. Surely we can find repentance in our hearts and love one another.

We cannot stand another decade of controversy. We have preachers today in their 40s who have never known an SBC without controversy. Today we tread the outer limits. It is not too late to return, to walk the part of sincere repentance and love, to stop the foolishness involved in pride, personalities, and exclusivism. "Forgetting those things behind... let us press on..."

Guest opinion...

Great Commission, our only compulsion

By Michael K. Whitehead

They called it the Cookie Patrol. Young Baptist housewives, dressed in their Sunday best, stood on the sidewalk just outside the entrance to the X-rated theater, passing out tracts and treats to customers and employees.

Some men took the cookies and asked, "Why are you doing this?" The young mothers replied, "Because we believe Jesus loves you, and because we believe pornography hurts women and children, as well as the men who are addicted to it."

Reactions varied. One man threw a handful of tokens across the street, saying, "Thanks for changing my mind." A stripper asked for prayer and help to find a better job to support her children. One man with a bottle in a bag grumbled, "You have no right to be here! Stop forcing your religion on people."

When Christians exercise religious liberty to speak about Jesus

in public, someone is always offended (1 Pet. 2:8). Acts 3:1 finds Peter and John on the sidewalks of Jerusalem, healing a lame beggar and proclaiming the power of Jesus' name. Some Jewish leaders were offended and jailed the preachers. Peter and John would not be compelled by legal penalty. They felt compelled by God to speak the truth of the gospel. "For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard" (4:20).

Early Baptists such as Roger Williams understood that true religious faith cannot be coerced. Yet no one more aggressively applied his convictions to impact his culture, even founding the separate colony of Rhode Island to reflect his political and religious ideals. No doubt, some were offended.

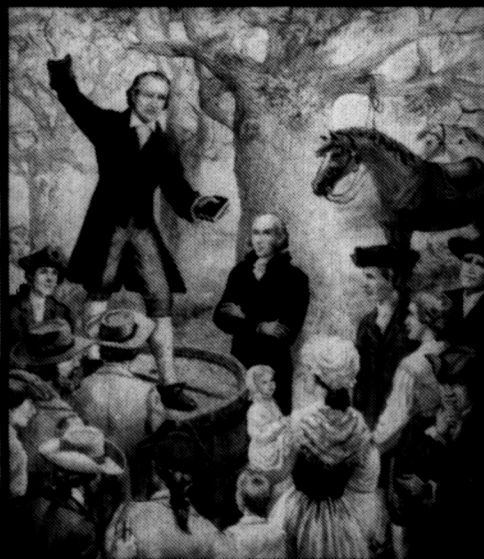
Baptists repudiate as wrong-headed and ineffective any efforts by government, church, or individuals to attempt to compel spir-

itual life which only God can give, and which man must freely receive. Our Constitution has been interpreted to promise that government will not coerce religious faith, but it cannot promise that no one will be offended. In fact, an essential part of religious liberty is the right of believers to be "offensive" for Christ's sake.

There is one form of compulsion Baptists value. All Christians are compelled by divine mandate to speak about Jesus to our world and to tell God's truth about sin (Matt. 28:18-20). Let us do it with speech that is seasoned with grace, but let us do it! Thank God for our religious liberty, and pray that he will spread freedom around the world. Ask God to help us fulfill our responsibility to exercise our freedom so that we will say, with Peter and John, "we cannot but speak."

Whitehead is general counsel, SBC Christian Life Commission, Washington, D.C.

"But I was free born"
(Acts 22:28)



Observe Christian Citizenship Sunday

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Pastors list pros and cons of full-time evangelists

ORLANDO, Fla. (BP) — Some pastors are cautious about inviting full-time evangelists to speak in their churches, according to a number of preachers attending the Southern Baptist Convention June 14-16 in Orlando, Fla.

Dean Forrest, an evangelist based in Greenville, S.C., describes the participation of an evangelist as essential to the life of a local church.

"The evangelist is one of the five-fold ministry gifts mentioned in Ephesians 4," he said. "The evangelist is necessary if you want your church well-rounded."

The use of an evangelist "blesses a church whether anything visible happens or not," according to Benny Jackson, an evangelist based in Germantown, Tenn. "Some pastors don't really understand the role of the evangelist. They forget there's a gift of being an evangelist."

Ken Alford, pastor of Bell Shoals Church, Brandon, Fla., affirms the ministry of evangelists. "The Bible says the evangelist is one of God's gifts to the church. I do think our pastors

ought to consider using full-time evangelists," he said.

Steve Hollaway, pastor of Madison (N.J.) Church, however, said he would need to be convinced that full-time evangelism has "a valid biblical warrant and isn't a product of 19th-century revivalism."

"There was no professional evangelist until the 19th century. What did people before that think?" he asked, answering, "...the (evangelist mentioned in Ephesians 4) was anyone who shared the gospel, such as a few laypersons in my church who seem to have that gift."

Alford's previous pastorate was at Morrison Heights Church in Clinton. He said the church was consistently reaching people and didn't hold many series of revival meetings.

But the year before Alford left Morrison Heights, he invited evangelist Jay Strack to preach a series of revival services.

"The Sunday night service was so well attended that we moved the weeknight services to the coliseum at Mississippi College,"

Alford recalled. "We had 103 professions of faith. That made me realize that mass evangelism is not dead. It still has a place in the church."

When choosing revival speakers, some pastors turn to friends from seminary or college, but that may not always be the best choice, said C. Ray Gentry, direc-

tor of missions for Coosa and Lookout Valley Associations in Fort Oglethorpe, Ga.

"It depends on the need of the church and the purpose of the revival," said Gentry, a pastor for several years until his recent move to associational missions. "If there needs to be a harvest revival, a pastor should probably

use a vocational evangelist in contrast to a personal friend."

Alford noted pastors are often evangelistic as they preach from the Bible. "But at times," he said, "we need to have an event with a steady focus on evangelism. There are men who are gifted in drawing the net, and we need to use them."

THE SECOND FRONT PAGE

The Baptist Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

Thursday, June 30, 1994

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Casino plans withdrawn; permanent ban proposed

By William H. Perkins Jr.

Developers of a proposed casino complex within sight of Gulfshore Baptist Assembly in Pass Christian withdrew their state application June 26, following months of intense opposition from Mississippi Baptists concerned about their state campground and local residents who feared the destruction of their quiet neighborhood.

Opposition leaders vowed June 27 to press on for a promise from the Mississippi Gaming Commission (MGC) that the site will be permanently off-limits to any gambling operation.

Hank Ros, the Gulf Coast attorney hired by neighborhood residents to fight the proposal, said he intends to pursue a permanent ban at the MGC hearing in Biloxi on June 30, when Spectrum, Inc.'s now-withdrawn bid for the casino was originally scheduled for a hearing.

"We will request that the site be declared unsuitable. This fight is not against Spectrum; it is against anybody who wants to build a casino in this neighborhood," he said.

Ros credited overwhelming opposition from neighborhood residents, civic associations, and the largest property owner in the area — Mississippi Baptists — as the major factor in defeating the proposal.

"The residents began the opposition, but Mississippi Baptists were integral," he stressed.

A call went out several weeks ago from the Christian Action Commission (CAC) of the Mississippi Baptist Convention for the state's Baptists to express their displeasure to MGC, and they apparently got their message across.

Paul Harvey, MGC executive director, said in Jackson's *The Clarion-Ledger* newspaper on June 27 that he was forced to hire additional staffers just to deal with the correspondence that was pouring into the MGC office.

"There were boxes and boxes of letters," Harvey told the newspaper.

Paul Jones, CAC executive director, confirmed the Mississippi Baptist Convention will support a permanent ban.

"We are pleased Spectrum has withdrawn, but this in no way provides the protection we want for Gulfshore. Another gambling company could start this process all over again, so we are going to request that MGC declare the site permanently unacceptable," he said.

Jones and Ros both said they are encouraging Baptists who already planned to attend the June 30 hearing to proceed with those plans.

"We're going ahead with the hearing. Gulfshore and the neighborhood will not be protected until official action is taken to declare the site unacceptable for any gambling facility," Jones said.

The hearing will begin at 9 a.m. on Thursday, June 30, at the Treasure Bay Hotel in Biloxi, part of a casino complex that was previously known at the Royal D'Iberville Hotel.

The hotel is located at 1980 Beach Boulevard (U.S. Highway 90).

For more information, contact CAC at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 968-3800.

MALT conference agenda finalized for August 26-27

By William H. Perkins Jr.

A number of Baptist county associations and state departments are combining their resources to present the first Metro Area Leader Training (MALT) conference, slated for Aug. 26-27, at First Church, Jackson.

The massive undertaking will include 195 sessions on 159 different conferences conducted by 68 faculty members, according to James Webster, MALT steering committee chairman and director

of church services for Hinds-Madison Association.

The 159 conferences are listed under the major areas of General Officer, Adult Leadership, Youth, Children, Children/Preschool Leadership, and Preschool. A complete listing of topics will appear in the July 14 edition of *The Baptist Record*.

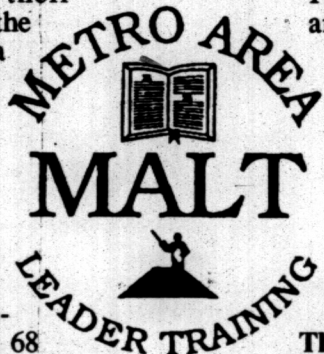
Registration will be conducted on Friday, Aug. 26, beginning at 6 p.m. The sessions, each lasting 50 minutes, will begin at 7 p.m. and 8 p.m. on Friday evening. Saturday morning registration will begin at 7:30 a.m., with sessions starting on the hour at 8 a.m. and running until the last session begins at 12 noon.

Registration can be made as individuals or groups. Registration fee for each person from the sponsoring associations is \$5, while the registration fee for each person outside the sponsoring associations is \$10.

Registrants can choose any seven different conferences. Pre-registration deadline is Aug. 19, and each pre-registered person will be assured a notebook and program booklet.

Sponsoring associations include Metro (Hinds-Madison), Rankin, Warren, Simpson, Leake, Copiah/Lincoln, and Yazoo. Mississippi Baptist Convention Board departments involved in MALT include Sunday School and Discipleship Training.

For more information, contact Webster at 6530 Dogwood View Parkway, Jackson, MS 39213. Telephone: (601) 362-8676.



Ben Atkinson, minister of education at First Church, Vicksburg, and a member of the MALT steering committee, plots room assignments for the 195 sessions that comprise the Aug. 26-27 training conference. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

Fifth Acteens Convention draws 14,000

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP) — Almost 14,000 Southern Baptist teenage girls and their leaders filled the coliseum at Birmingham-Jefferson Civic Center for four days of experiences in contemporary Christian missions.

The occasion was the fifth National Acteens Convention, held every five years under the auspices of Woman's Missionary Union.

Program planners drew on pageantry, missionary commissioning and testimonies, an Acteens birthday party, and 37 conferences on topics of interest to teenagers to communicate the Christian message.

The teenagers opened the convention by learning a new song, "Heart of the Journey," sung by

Michele Wagner of Cleveland, Ohio. The song served as the theme of the convention.

The girls brought 5,000 stuffed teddy bears and 7,000 pairs of canvas shoes for their missionaries to give to needy children where they work.

Texas Acteens led states in

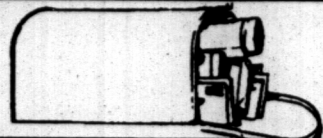
attendance with 1,957. South Carolina followed with 1,446; Tennessee, 1,181; Alabama, 1,070; North Carolina, 994; Mississippi, 840; Georgia, 827; Virginia, 569; Oklahoma, 383; Missouri, 361; Arkansas, 337, and Florida, 333.

(Additional NAC coverage will appear in the July 14 issue.)

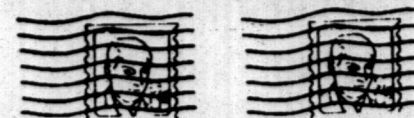
No BR July 7

There will be no *Baptist Record* published on July 7. Because our postal contract requires that we publish only 50 issues per year, *The Baptist Record* does not produce issues for the weeks of July 4 and Christmas.

The following deadlines will be observed: News items should be in *The Baptist Record* offices by noon on Thursday, July 7, in order to make the July 14 issue. Advertising space must be reserved by June 30 for the July 14 issue, with copy due by July 5.



Letters to the editor



Weld, not divide

Editor:

It was a joy to attend the Southern Baptist Convention in Orlando, Fla. I have attended almost every convention in the past 35 years.

I am a conservative theologically and have earnestly tried to stay out of the controversy of our convention. As a director of missions, I have tried to lead the association I serve to work harmoniously with pastors and churches regardless of their political stands during the past two years.

I have been a promoter of our Cooperative Program since I began my ministry 44 years ago. I do not agree with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship's pulling out and dividing our denomination's Cooperative Program gifts. I am however, a little disturbed over the action not to accept Cooperative Baptist Fellowship monies designated through the Cooperative Program. It would seem at a time like this we should be trying to weld relationships rather than divide.

As I listened to the young man who made the motion castigating the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of gross sin, it was extremely disturbing. I doubt sincerely if he could prove any of the charges he made.

At a time when Cooperative Program gifts are down and the kingdom's work is suffering and cutbacks are being made because gifts are down, this is not the time to drive that proverbial wedge to further divide our beloved denomination.

I believe that Jim Henry is the man to pull Southern Baptists together again, but be assured the action taken will not make his job easy. This is a time when we need to find ways to come together in the name of Jesus rather than cas-

East Columbia celebrates 75th anniversary

East Columbia Church, Columbia, will mark its 75th anniversary July 2-3.

The celebration will begin July 2 at 4:30 p.m., when the church will hold a fellowship time, followed by a hamburger supper in the church fellowship hall. At 7 p.m., former pastors and ministers of music will reunite, and watermelon will be served.

July 3 will be High Attendance Day for Sunday School, beginning at 10 a.m. A former pastor will speak in the morning worship at 11, and a covered dish dinner will be served at noon. A memorial service for deceased members will be observed at 1 p.m.

For more information, call the pastor, Gerald K. Gordon, at (601) 736-2683.

tigating those we disagree with. Let's pray for Jim Henry.

M.C. Johnson
Director of missions
North Delta Association

Editorial intolerant

Editor:

I am writing to express my disappointment concerning remarks made about Jerry Falwell in your editorial of June 9.

Over the past two years, I have been a regular reader of *The Baptist Record*. One of the primary characteristics I have noted in your publication has been a constant call for inclusiveness among members of the SBC. You have consistently derided, often time with inflated or inaccurate comments, various leaders of the SBC which you have portrayed as being intolerant of persons who do not share the same beliefs on the Bible or a host of other "peripheral" issues. At the same time, you have regularly published accounts of the activity of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship and called for SBC leadership to be absolutely inclusive of the CBF leadership and general membership. It seems that your call for inclusiveness ended somewhere short of Jerry Falwell.

In your brief analysis of Falwell you failed to mention several facets of his ministry such as his firm stance against abortion which is coupled with the establishment of many homes for unwed mothers. Thomas Road Church sponsors several other social ministry programs which were conveniently overlooked in your assessment of Falwell's ministry.

You have become exactly what you have so frequently claimed to disdain. In stating your "voice says the SBC does not need Mr. Falwell," you revealed your own intolerance for someone with whom you do not agree. Perhaps what the SBC does not need is a "voice" which is intolerant and belligerent toward someone so obviously used by God.

George F. Husk
Poplarville

Editorial on target

Editor:

I'm writing to express my profound gratitude for your splendid and courageous editorial on Jerry Falwell and the SBC as it appeared in your June 9 edition.

You are precisely on target. You have not only given an opin-

ion but you stated some specific facts which will be of tremendous help to those who really want to know the truth. Unfortunately, we live in an age where there are very few truth seekers.

R.G. Puckett, editor
Biblical Recorder newsjournal
North Carolina

Regarding Prescott

Editor:

The June 16 *Baptist Record* reprinted an article from *The (Memphis) Commercial Appeal* about Prescott Memorial Church.

For many years this church has been listed in the weekly directory of churches in that same paper. It always has been listed being both a member of the American Baptist Convention (the old Northern Baptist Convention) and the Southern Baptist Convention. This information was not given in *The Baptist Record*.

Paragraph 4 of David Waters' (*Commercial Appeal*) article lists the things usually done by the American Baptist Convention churches, and seldom followed by Southern Baptist churches.

Name withheld



ALL NEW CHAMPION CRUSADER

14 Passenger Full Size Bus
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Bus Supply Company

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(601) 684-2900 McComb, MS 1-800-748-8681

Vacation Bible Schools

Pocahontas (Hinds-Madison):
July 11-15; 6:30-8:30 p.m.; carnival will be held on July 9 from 9:30 a.m.-noon. Steve Jordan, pastor.

Homecomings

Malmaison, Carrollton: July 10; services, 11 a.m.; covered dish in fellowship hall at noon; 1:30 p.m. singing; Southern Cross, Salis, guest singers; Art Slatten, Greenwood, guest speaker; Sonny Redwine, pastor.

The Congregation of Parkway Baptist Church

Cordially Invites You To Attend

"A Stepping Stone to A New Horizon"

Sunday, July 10, 1994
10:00 a.m.

2603 West Capitol Street
Jackson, Mississippi

Picnic Under the Arches

Organ & Piano Concert Following Lunch

Former staff members, guests,
and friends are cordially
invited to attend.

...

Effective Sunday, July 17, 1994

10:00 a.m. Morning Worship

6:00 p.m. Evening Worship

Nelson Hall Auditorium

Mississippi College

Clinton, Mississippi

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ADOPTION: KIND, CARING

schoolteacher and fishing enthusiast husband wish to share their love of learning and the out of doors with infant in warm, loving family. Please call Sharon and Keith collect: (401) 521-4968. Thank you so much for helping us.

BIG TOP GOSPEL TENTS, all

sizes. Open Air Ministries. (318) 939-2239.

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RANEAN "The Paths of Paul" with Bill Bright 7-Nights \$1,495; CARIBBEAN 5-Nights with Steve Brown \$695; ALASKA 7-Nights \$1,335; WALK THRU THE BIBLE \$495. Call Celebration Tours 1-800-998-6877.

NEEDED: CHRISTIAN LADY to

stay with elderly Christian lady in Hazlehurst area for small salary (day or overnight shift). Mentally sound, with some physical dis-

ability. References required. Call 1-800-547-0037.

NEEDED: GROWING CHURCH

wants to buy folding curtains for room dividers. We will come and take them down. Robinhood Baptist Church, P.O. Box 432, Brandon, MS 39043. (601) 825-2067.

CHURCH PEW CUSHIONS:

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GREAT PASSION PLAY in Eureka Springs, Ark., Reserve Now at KELLER'S COUNTRY DORM RESORT (For Groups of 12 or More)! Just \$30 Each includes Lodging, Meals, Taxes, & BEST (\$12.50) TICKETS! Call (501) 253-8418.

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financially secure Christian couple wishes to adopt white newborn. We offer much happiness and love. Call Sandy and Kent at 1-800-675-5457 or our adoption agency at 1-800-537-6230.

What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light: and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the housetops. Matthew 10:27 NAS

HouseTops is a supplement to the **Baptist Record** and is produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

(This is one in a series on Baptists—who we are and what we do.)

OOPS!...

In the last issue of **HouseTops**, we mentioned that the summer WMU leadership training opportunities included a request for canned goods and \$25 per person to donate to a selected ministry center. That's a great idea—but we misplaced a decimal place. We were only asking for 25 cents per person. But we would accept ANY gift you choose to make.



Gulfshore Baptist Assembly
Pass Christian, Miss.

For more information contact Charlotte Bass with the Church Music Department at (601) 968-3800, ext. 3867.

**Previously scheduled for August 11-12, 1994, at Mississippi College
has been cancelled.**

pray this day...

July 15-31, 1994

*All-State
Youth Choir*

Here, for your advanced planning, is the schedule of concerts planned by the All State Youth Choir. The choir is made up of 78 teenage volunteers who passed an audition and participated in a practice camp.

July 27, 1994, 7:00 p.m.
Central Baptist Church
 3rd and 21st Street

July 28, 1994, 7:00 p.m.
First Baptist Church of Sharon
 North from Laurel on 5th Avenue or
 Exit 104 on I-59 to the Sharon Community

July 29, 1994, 10:00 a.m.
Baptist Building
 515 Mississippi Street

July 29, 1994, 3:00 p.m.
North Park Mall
 (in front of J. C. Penney)
 1200 E. County Line Road

Mississippi Baptist All-State Youth
In Concert
1994

Sponsored by the
Church Music Department
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

A Ministry of the Cooperative Program
"Helping to Bring Mississippi and the World to Jesus"

July 30, 1994, 6:30 p.m.
Emmanuel Baptist Church
 Highway 8 and 51 Intersection

July 31, 1994, 11:00 a.m.
First Baptist Church
 104 - 108 Panola Avenue

July 31, 1994, 7:00 p.m.
Immanuel Baptist Church
 503 18th Avenue, North

August 1, 1994, 7:00 p.m.
Broadmoor Baptist Church
 787 E. Northside Drive

HOUSE OF



Mississippi/World Partnerships

Honduras in Desperate Need of Water

The entire country of Honduras is rationing electricity. The current is turned off in most areas around 40 hours a week. Only emergency services have a continual supply.

The problem? The country's principal reservoir has been depleted so that the main hydroelectric plant does not have sufficient water to run at full power. In short, the country needs rain, and lots of it. Should the water level drop another 36 feet they will be unable to generate any electricity. One can imagine what that could do to industry, hospitals, schools, etc.

Join Honduras Baptists in praying for rain.

Zimbabwe Partnership Winding Down

This is the third and final year of the partnership with Zimbabwe. That does not mean a lessening of activity—on the contrary, it means an increase.

- A team of six under the leadership of Keith Wilkinson (Sunday School Director, MBCB) is conducting three training conferences in Zimbabwe now. They have 500 persons pre-registered.
- Church planting teams, comprised of ten persons each, will be going in July, September and October. These teams are filled to capacity.
- The response to the gospel has been tremendously affirming—almost every group has started new churches.
- Isaac Chigete and his wife will be guests at the Mississippi Baptist Convention in November. He is a leader of the Zimbabwe Baptist Convention and has served as National Partnership Coordinator with us.
- The final project in Zimbabwe is an agricultural project which will end in May 1995. Michael and Susan Loftice have led this project. The participation and response have been exciting. This past growing season, the project involved 205 farmers, with 500 farmers anticipated for the program this year. Already three churches have been started through this project.

Pray for the remaining days of this very meaningful partnership.

CONFERENCES FOR DEACONS, SECRETARIES, AND MINISTERS' WIVES

will be offered **ONLY** during the
July 14-16 Session of
Growing Churches for Tomorrow
Gulfshore Baptist Assembly

*These ministries are special assignments for the
Church Administration-Pastoral Ministries Department*

For more information, contact CA-PM Department
at **(601) 968-3800 (Julius Thompson, Director)**



Musicians Needed for Central Hills Baptist Retreat

The summer Royal Ambassador camping program at Central Hills Baptist Retreat near Kosciusko, could do with a song or two. Dan West, camp manager would like to hear from church singing groups—choirs, ensembles, soloists—who could visit any Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday evening to participate in worship services there. Especially needed is music on **July 6, July 12, July 19, and July 26.**

Call West at 601 -289-9730.



GROWING CHURCHES for Tomorrow

In previous issues of HouseTops, we have acquainted you with **Growing Churches for Tomorrow**, four conferences designed to train all Brotherhood, Discipleship Training, Sunday School, WMU leaders, pastors and staff. Below is a listing of the four dates with the convening departments, and the worship and music leaders:

July 7-9 — Discipleship and Family Ministry
(all Discipleship leadership are urged to attend this conference)

Preacher: John Temple, FBC, Madison
Musician: Mike Harland, Crossgates BC, Brandon

July 14-16 — Church Administration
(Deacons, secretaries and minister's wives training)

Preacher: Calvin Miller, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary
Musician: Paul Koonce, Temple BC, Hattiesburg

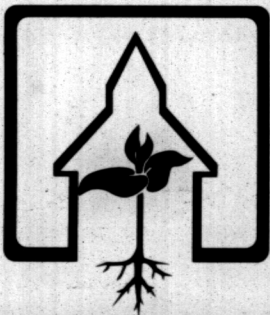
July 28-30 — Sunday School
(Special emphasis on Sunday School leadership)

Preacher: Randy Rich, FBC, Laurel
Musician: TBA

August 4-6 — Sunday School

Preacher: Bobby Douglas, FBC, Columbus
Musician: Doug Haney, FBC, Meridian

To receive more information on the about conferences please write the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, (convening department), P. O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530; or call the proper department at (601) 968-3800; (Discipleship) ext. 3884, (Church Administration) ext. 3905, (Sunday School) ext. 3891.



Youth Evangelism Conference
December 29-30, 1994
Mississippi College Coliseum

Spread the Fire of
HIS LOVE

Pam Thum -
Concert Artist

Rick Ousley -
Worship Leader

Paul Horton - Music
Worship Leader
Lithia Springs, GA

Doug Berky -
Mime Artist
Greenville, SC

Susie Foot -
Testimony
Jackson, MS

1994

FAMILY WEEK

"Fitness for the Family"

July 4-7, Gulfshore Baptist Assembly
(Monday supper through Thursday Noon)

Featured Speaker:
Dr. J. Clark Hensley

Music Leader:
Mark Tullos

Special Feature:
Drama - Charleene Barnette
and Mark Tullos

Children's Activities:
TeamKid

Youth Leaders:
Ted Poore and Rick Tillotson

Free time for families
--afternoons and all day Wednesday

COST PER PERSON - Rooms and Meals

Class "A" Accommodations (2 per room)		Class "C" Accommodations (3 or more per room)	
Adult (12 years old and above)	\$108.50	Adult	\$99.50
Child (2-11)	\$52.64	Youth (12 years old-12 grade)	\$55.05
		Child (2-11 years old)	\$31.27

REGISTRATION 1994 Gulfshore Baptist Assembly

Names of Adults _____

Address: _____

Children's Names and Birthdays (month/year) _____



Mail with \$30.00 deposit for an individual or \$60.00 for a family to Gulfshore Baptist Assembly, 100 First Street, Pass Christian, MS 39571

HOUSE TOPS

Final Cross Over figures: 776 professions of faith

ATLANTA (BP) — Cross Over Orlando resulted in 776 professions of faith, according to final figures compiled by the Home Mission Board's evangelism section.

The annual witnessing effort before the Southern Baptist Convention is designed to saturate the convention city with the gospel and aid local churches in reaching people for Christ, said Darrell Robinson, HMB vice president for evangelism.

The 776 professions of faith broke down as follows:

- 136 from street or performance evangelism,
- 296 from block parties,
- 223 from door-to-door witnessing,
- 34 from evangelistic rallies and
- 87 from "harvest Sunday"

services in 40 churches that hosted a special speaker or activity.

In addition to the local impact, Cross Over also introduces visiting pastors and church leaders to innovative forms of witnessing, such as block parties and street evangelism.

Other statistics from Cross Over:

- 6,682 people were fed during 18 block parties,
- 11,921 homes were visited during door-to-door witnessing; people were at home 7,407 times,
- the plan of salvation was presented at least 5,380 times,
- 4,866 Bibles were distributed and
- at least 1,201 people were trained to witness.

Next year's Cross Over will be in Atlanta, Saturday, June 17.

Jackson churches follow membership to suburbs

Members of Broadmoor Church, Jackson, approved June 12 a proposal to buy property in Madison County to be used as the future site of the church's ministries.

Broadmoor is the second Jackson congregation in recent months to begin the process of relocating its facilities to the suburbs.

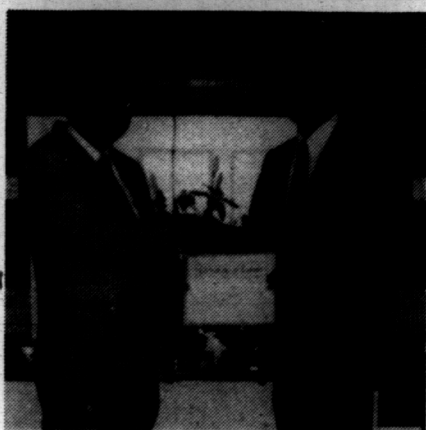
Parkway Church voted last fall to buy 46 acres in Clinton for its ministries. In April, the church sold its Jackson properties to an African-American church which plans to take possession of the buildings by late summer. The congregation will hold services in buildings on Mississippi College's campus until its new facilities are built on acreage adjacent to the Natchez Trace Parkway, said Pastor Ken Anderson.

Broadmoor Church, however, has no determined schedule for relocating its ministries to the new site, said Pastor Jim Futral. The church's decision, he explained, was prompted by a member's gift of six and a half acres on the north end of Highland Colony Parkway, near the junction of Hwy 463 and I-55. The proposal approved by the church accepted the member's gift along with the option to buy

up to 23.5 additional acres.

In both instances, a high percentage of the church's membership lives in the area of the new church site.

Names in the News



Earl Barron (right) was recently licensed to the ministry by Ingram Church, Baldwin. Joe Herndon (left), pastor, presented the license certificate. Barron is available for interim and supply, phone (601) 365-2666.

Thursday, June 30, 1994

BAPTIST RECORD PAGE 5

Staff Changes

Spring Hill Church, Waterford, has called **Paul A. Middleton** of Olive Branch as interim pastor. The Memphis native is a graduate of Memphis State University and attends Mid-America Seminary.

Dennis Edward Salley Jr. has been called by **Valley Park Church, Sharkey-Issaquena Association**, as pastor. A native of Meridian, he received his education at Mississippi State University and Southwestern Seminary. Included in his previous places of service is **Kirkville Church, Kirkville.**



Salley

First Church, Okolona, has called **William Randall Lewman** as pastor effective June 13. A fellowship will be held in honor of Lewman and his family at the church, July 10 from 2-4 p.m. A native of McComb, Lewman

received his education at Southwest Mississippi Community College, William Carey College, New Orleans Seminary, and Reformed Seminary, Jackson. His previous place of service was Mt. Zion Church, Brookhaven.

Rocky Creek Church, Lucedale, has called **Ronald D. Walley Jr.** as minister of music and youth effective June 1. He is a senior at William Carey College. His previous place of service was Bayou View Church, Gulfport. Jerry W. Mixon is pastor.

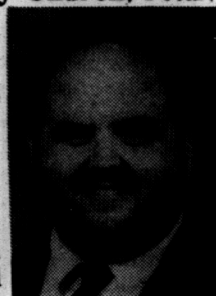


Walley

Mt. Zion Church, Independence, has called **Rick Burton** as pastor effective June 19. A native of Texas, he received his education at Wayland Baptist University and Southwestern Seminary. His previous place of service was First Church, Houlika.

First Church, Lambert, has called **Matt Lipe** as summer youth director effective June 12. A native of Oklahoma, he received his education at the University of Oklahoma and will be attending Southwestern Seminary in the fall. Stephen J. Huber is pastor.

Petal-Harvey Church, Petal, has called **William R. Herman** as minister of music. He moved to Petal from Easthaven Church, Brookhaven. Herman received degrees from William Carey College and New Orleans Seminary.



Herman

First Church, Pontotoc, has called **Michael McVay** as minister of education effective July 3. A native of Pensacola, Fla., he received his education at the University of West Florida, Pensacola, and New Orleans Seminary.

AT&T gives support to gay games, AFA urges long distance boycott

TUPELO — The decision by communications giant AT&T to be a major sponsor of the Gay Games IV and Cultural Festival held in late June in New York comes as no surprise, says the American Family Association. Corporate sponsorships for the homosexual games go at prices up to \$250,000.

"AT&T has long been a leader in promoting the homosexual lifestyle," said Donald E. Wildmon, president of AFA. "The company for years has observed Gay and Lesbian Awareness Week and presented 'homophobia workshops' to promote homosexuality to their corporate managers. They have

been giving special corporate recognition and support to the homosexuals employed by the company for years."

In addition, AT&T recently began a direct mail advertising campaign seeking support from homosexuals. The promotional mail comes in a lavender envelope, contains a rainbow colored telephone card, a letter from AT&T's "Lesbian, Bisexual and Gay" employee group and a brochure showing a male homosexual couple. The caption on the front of the brochure reads, "A call for change."

A company spokesman said AT&T is not concerned with a

consumer backlash because of their support for homosexuality. "Anyone with that kind of attitude (concern about the homosexual lifestyle) has to lose it," John Mellor told Advertising Age.

"AT&T has made a decision to invest money and corporate support for this morally repulsive lifestyle," said Wildmon.

Other ways AT&T has promoted homosexuality include: the sponsorship of the homosexual musical "Falsettos;" the use of Brian McNaught's video "On Being Gay" to indoctrinate AT&T employees; and the promotion of "comprehensive" sex education programs which advocate homosexuality.

AFA encourages individuals and businesses to cancel their AT&T long distance service. Consumers can call 1-800-222-0300 to cancel their AT&T service.

Just for the Record

Wynndale Church, Jackson, will celebrate "Magnificent Monday" on July 11 at 7 p.m. Frank Pollard, pastor of First Church, Jackson, will be the guest speaker. Pollard was the preacher on the "Baptist Hour" from 1976-1986, and is the author of four books. Due to the special Monday service, Wynndale Church will not have evening services on July 10.



Pollard

Mississippi College has announced that **Charles E. Martin**, Vice-President for Academic Affairs, will be the 1994 McLemore Lecturer in American

Studies scheduled for July 6 at 10:30 a.m. in the Learning Resources Center of the Leland Speed Library. The McLemore Lectureship is a vital part of the American Studies Seminary, a graduate level program for social studies teachers hosted by the college each summer. The lectureship is named in honor of the late Richard Aubrey McLemore, former president of the college, and his wife, Nannie Pitts McLemore.

Morgantown Church, Natchez, will celebrate its 40th anniversary on July 9 and 10. A reception will be held on Saturday at 6:30 p.m. in fellowship hall for former members and staff. Activities on Sunday will include dinner on the grounds after the morning service with an afternoon service at 1:30 p.m.

Revival Dates

First, Eudora: July 6-10; services nightly at 7; Sunday, homecoming with lunch at noon; Steve Albonette, pastor, speaker.

New Home, Fulton: July 10-13; services, Sunday, 10 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Perry Neal, Montgomery, Ala., evangelist.

Center Grove, Meridian: July 10-13; Sunday, Sunday School, 10 a.m., worship, 11 a.m., Discipleship Training, 5:30 p.m., and worship, 6:30 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; David Jay, Quitman, evangelist; Edd Holloman, pastor.

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Uniform God's unmerited gifts



By Richard Bradley
Exodus 16

Those of us who are parents can certainly appreciate Moses' situation in Exodus 16. We parents soon discover that no matter how hard we try, our efforts on behalf of our children are often inadequate in their estimation. However, while we might expect grumbling and complaining from small children, it is admittedly a little disconcerting to hear it coming from the people of God. It is amazing but true that God provides for even those who grumble and complain.

The people's murmuring (vv. 2-3). At least two things are worth mentioning concerning the murmuring of the people: 1) Those who grumbled against the leadership of Moses and Aaron had had precious little practical experience at being the people of God. These very same grumblers and complainers had been slaves in Egypt for 400 years! We can almost rationalize their murmuring by noting their lack of experience; 2) We must wonder where these people were when the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob delivered them from the hand of Pharaoh. Changing the Nile into a river of blood and parting the waters of the Red Sea were acts of pure power which could hardly have gone unnoticed. Could anything be too hard for a God who could do these things? Why had they not learned from these experiences? Why haven't we?

God's promise (vv. 4-5). God's response to the grumbling and complaining of his people was both a testimony to his grace and a further test of their obedience. God's grace is seen in both what he did and what he did not do. God did not judge his people for all of their lack of faith and he did provide for them bread in the morning (v. 4) and meat in the evening (v. 8). In his grace, God meets the immediate needs of his people.

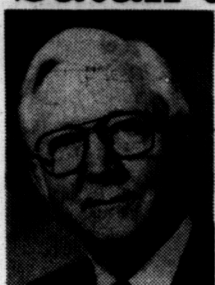
How would the people respond to this display of God's grace? Would they continue to demand and complain and fail to take seriously their responsibilities to God, or would they in gratitude for this wonderful display of God's grace give themselves in obedience to his instructions concerning the keeping of the Sabbath (v. 5)? As the people of God, our acts of disobedience speak louder than our protestations of fidelity (v. 4).

Moses' and Aaron's report (vv. 6-7). We are reminded in James 1:17 that every good and perfect gift comes from God. The gracious acts of God are vivid portrayals of his essential nature. Want to know what God is really like? Where do we look to attain such knowledge? Look at that which God has provided for us which is totally without merit on our part. For the Jews, it was bread in the morning and meat in the evening. For those of us who know Christ as our personal Savior, it is the free gift of salvation, apart from works (Eph. 2:8-9). God's actions on behalf of his people teach us that he is loving, gracious, and long-suffering. He is truly wonderful!

God's provisions (vv. 13-18). In response to the people's complaint that they had no meat, God gave them meat. In response to their complaint that they had no bread, God gave them bread. However, we must remember that God doesn't always give us what we complain about. Like a wise and loving parent, our heavenly Father must distinguish between our legitimate needs and our selfish wants. Even though the people complained in a selfish, childish manner, God met what was apparently a legitimate concern. Feeding this vast number of people was no small concern. But why had the people assumed that God would not provide for them? They did not know God for who he really is and did not trust that He would do what only he could! Would they learn from God's provisions? Some would and some wouldn't. Have we? Some of us have and some of us haven't. Some of us still grumble and complain and some of us simply trust the God who provides.

Bradley is pastor, Handsboro Church, Gulfport.

Bible Book Satan tests Job's faith



By Raymond Kolb
Job 1, 2

Are you ready? The curtain is about to open. An exciting drama will unfold. It includes scenes of ecstatic happiness and others of horrible suffering. But, just before the curtain, let's meet the main characters in the first part of this continued story.

Job. Who was he? Where did he live? When did he live? "In the land of Uz there lived a man whose name was Job." Some references seem to indicate that Uz was east of Palestine and perhaps near Edom, possibly within modern Jordan, though this is not definite. He may have lived before any of our Bible was written. Yet, it seems that he had a relationship with the living God which is a challenge to us even now. This should remind us of our privilege and responsibility to study the Bible we have.

The first verse of the book mentions four outstanding qualities in describing the character of Job. 1) He was blameless, morally innocent, and wholesome. 2) He was upright, unbending in his conduct. Blameless and upright are sometimes used in parallel to emphasize integrity of character. He was a man one could count on for his high moral standards. 3) He feared God. His faith in God and his deep reverence for God so influenced his whole life that he was known as a very religious man. 4) He shunned evil. This is a natural result of his fearing God and walking with him. One cannot effectively walk with God and play with Satan at the same time.

Apparently Job had a happy home life. It seems that the children were married and had their own homes. Job must have taught his children true spiritual values.

Job was a very wealthy man. Are material possessions a gift from God? Do they indicate that God is pleased with those who have them? Does the loss of wealth imply that the owner is in sin? Is suffering always, or sometimes, a direct result of sin on the part of the one who suffers? Let the answers wait for the moment, but keep them in mind as the story unfolds.

The curtain is drawn and angels, or the sons of God, appear before God. Satan, the accuser, also appears along with them. "Where have you come from?" the Lord asks Satan. His characteristic answer is "From roaming the earth and going back and forth on it." Would he not give the same answer today? How many times has he crossed your path within the last week? Satan accuses God of playing favorites with Job, of giving him special protection and fabulous wealth. But just take all of that away and you will see that Job is no better than anyone else, he claims.

God allows Satan limited freedom to test Job, and the testing is terrible. All of his wealth is suddenly taken away. But the worst is still to come. While all of his children were feasting in the home of his oldest son, a terrible storm struck and killed all of them.

Then Job tore his outer garment and shaved his head, both signs of mourning. Perhaps he had beautiful clothing representing his high former status, but which he no longer held. Still he did not accuse God of doing anything wrong.

Satan does not give up easily. He still accuses God of favoritism and says that Job will curse God to his face if he has to suffer physically. God allows that test also, and Job is afflicted with terrible sores all over his entire body. It seems that Satan even finds an ally in Job's wife who feels that she cannot bear to see him suffer more. She tells him to curse God and die—just get it over with. He reprimands her.

Three old friends hear of Job's plight and agree to visit him together. When they arrive his appearance startles them. They sit for seven days and seven nights just looking at him without a word. What comfort!

Kolb is a retired missionary now living in Clinton.

Life and Work Sufferers yet comforters



By Ruth Allen
2 Corinthians 1

The pastor of a large Boston suburban church was requested some years ago to bring a message on "comfort." He had served the 800-member congregation for two years and had wondered how much the message was really needed. He took his membership list and tabulated the number of families who had suffered some unusual grief or distress during the previous two years. Perhaps it was a death in the family, a serious illness, a major disappointment, or another type of suffering. To his astonishment he discovered that no less than 80% of his families had been in need of comfort within the past two years. Sooner or later all of us feel the need for the comfort only Christ can offer.

Consequently suffering, sorrow, and disappointment are common to all. There comes a time when we must endure pain, stress, or discomfort of some type. Where then does a person turn? One can turn to God and to friends who have experienced the comforting of our Lord. Our God, whom Paul describes as "the Father of mercies," is a God of compassion and sympathy.

Comfort, in its truest form, means "to be strong together" or "to be brave together." Jesus uses the term *paraclete*, which means in English "comforter," or "to call to one's side." He uses *paraclete* to describe the work of the Holy Spirit (John 14:16, 16:7). In the Old Testament, the word "comfort" means to stabilize or to lend balance to life. Paul also emphasizes that God is the "God of all comfort, who comforts us in our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we are comforted of God" (vv. 3-4).

The experience of being comforted by God qualifies those being comforted to become competent comforters of others. As we experience pain and tribulation, we become more adequate to help others. As God assists us in comforting, we assist others in securing blessed relief.

The emotions of Jesus, as he stood at the grave of Lazarus, express the heart of God. His loving compassion for all mankind is expressed with two very emphatic words: "Jesus wept" (John 11:35). These two words characterize the warmth and magnitude of the greatest love in all the world. Sympathy and compassion are never attributed by heathen people to their gods; these foreign qualities are unknown in pagan religions. The gods portrayed by the Greek epic poet Homer weep and bellow when wounded but are never touched by man's infirmity. William Gladstone, the 19th century statesman, observed, "No Homeric deity will ever be found who will make a personal sacrifice on behalf of a human client." However, this is exactly what our Lord has done for us. He has made the greatest personal sacrifice of all—"giving his life, a ransom for many." Consequently, our God is a God who earnestly seeks to "come to our side" to strengthen and to undergird us in time of grief and sorrow. His love and concern silences the claims of critics who rely on other gods. What a message of comfort Christians are privileged to convey to our hurting and suffering world!

A.J. Gordon, a noted preacher, once said, "I have long since ceased to pray, 'Lord, have compassion on a lost and suffering world.' I remember the day and the hour when I seemed to hear the Lord rebuking me, 'I have had compassion on a lost and hurting world, and now it is your turn to have compassion on the hurting world.'"

Just as the message of Paul to the Corinthian church was sorely needed, today the same message should be taken as a serious charge from God. We must all become comforters in words, deeds, and prayers. There is a time to speak words of comfort in love and understanding. There is a time which calls for deeds which meet needs and speak to hurting hearts through actions, not words. Our prayers on behalf of a needy friend claim the promise to assert his power. No other experience quite equals such concerted prayers.

As we experience personal sufferings, may we take them as blessings from God. Pray that we may know the fellowship of his sufferings (Phil. 3:10) and comfort others in the name of our Lord.

Allen lives in Jackson.



Pen Pal Club

Dear Pen Pal Club:

Hi! My name is Summer Moffett. I am in the 7th grade, and I'm 13 years old. I am a Christian and go to Stanton Baptist Church. I like to read, go to church, talk to my friends, play the piano, and sing. I also love to fish, go hunting with my Dad, and write letters. I'd love to have a boy or girl of any age to write me. Please send a photo. My address is 96 Clifford Road, Natchez, MS 39120.

Summer Moffett

Dear Pen Pal Club:

My name is Jessica Bufkin. I'm nine years old. I go to Mt. Zion Baptist Church. I like to spend time with my family and friends. I have one older sister. If you would like to be my pen pal, write to 245 E. Tucker Road, Florence, MS 39073.

Jessica Bufkin

Dear Pen Pal Club:

My name is Amy Smith. My hobbies are reading, writing letters and poetry, playing with Fatcat Milo, swimming, drawing, and listening to music (mainly rock). I don't watch much T.V. I go to Oakvale Baptist Church. I love GAs, but this is my last year. Next year, I'll be in the 7th grade. I would very much like a bunch of pen pals, all ages. Write me at P.O. Box 5, Oakvale, MS 39656.

Amy Smith

Dear Pen Pal Club:

Hi! My name is Meredith Harper. I'm 14 years old and attend Stanton Baptist Church. My hobbies are swimming, writing letters, talking on the phone, traveling, and playing all sports, especially softball and basketball. I would

like for a boy or girl to write me. I will write you back. My address is Rt. 1, Box 97, Fayette, MS 39069

Meredith Harper

Dear Pen Pal Club:

Hi! My name is Kristen Burton. I am 10 years old. My hobbies are talking on the phone, writing letters, riding on my bike, and playing with my friends. I attend Bissell Baptist Church. I go to a private school. I would like good, dependable pen pals. I will take boys or girls. If you have a picture, please send it. My address is Rt. 7, Box 316-F, Tupelo, MS 38801.

Kristen Burton

Dear Pen Pal Club:

My name is Jennifer Williamson. I am 11 years old going into the sixth grade. My birthday is Sept. 25. My hobbies are skating, basketball, softball, swimming, drawing, racing, shopping, and going to GAs. I go to Chunky Baptist Church. If you would like to be my pen pal, write to P.O. Box 175, Chunky, MS 39323.

Jennifer Williamson

Dear Pen Pal Club:

My name is John Robert Williamson. I am 6 years old and going into the first grade. My birthday is Jan. 4, and I would like a pen pal. I like to play football and baseball, play with my sister, and ride my bike. Please write to P.O. Box 175, Chunky, MS 39323.

John Robert Williamson

Dear Pen Pal Club:

My name is Lauren Baker. I am 13 years old. I am in the 8th grade at Strider Academy. My hobbies

include drawing, riding bikes, playing basketball, and cheering. I have been a junior high cheerleader for two years. If you would like to be my pen pal, please write and send a picture to P.O. Box 146, Sumner, MS 38957.

Lauren Baker

Dear Pen Pal Club:

My name is Jessie Brown. My hobbies are coloring, drawing, reading, and watching T.V. My favorite movie is "Beauty and the Beast." I am 7 years old. I am going into the 2nd grade. I would like for someone to write to me at 920 Caesar Road, Picayune, MS 39466.

Jessie Brown

Dear Pen Pal Club:

My name is Lisa Parker. I go to Cedar Grove Baptist Church. I am fixing to go into the second grade at Nicholson Elementary School. I am seven, and I want somebody to be my pen pal. My hobbies are drawing, painting, writing stories, and swimming. If you want to be my pen pal, please write to me at: 21 Nottoway Dr., Picayune, MS 39466.

Lisa Parker

Dear Pen Pal Club:

My name is Sarah Elizabeth Fayyad. I'm 12. My hobbies are talking on the phone, styling my hair, putting on makeup, shopping, and hangin' with friends. I prefer a pen pal between the ages of 12-16. My address is P.O. Box 194, Lambert, MS 38643.

Sarah Elizabeth Fayyad

Dear Pen Pal Club:

My name is Jennifer Maddox. I go to Goodwater Baptist Church. I am going into the 5th grade at Magee Middle School. My hobbies are collecting dolls, riding bikes, swimming, and writing letters. If you would like to be my pen pal, please write to me at Rt. 1, Box 327, Magee, MS 39111. Please send a picture.

Jennifer Maddox

Dear Pen Pal Club:

My name is Laura Lee Rounsaville. I am 12 years old. My hobbies include softball, swimming, talking on the phone, listening to music, riding horses, and riding my bike. My address is 514 Glenwild Road, Grenada, MS 38901. Please send a photo.

Laura Lee Rounsaville

CHILDREN'S PAGE

OLD TESTAMENT ORCHESTRA

(ANCIENT BIBLICAL INSTRUMENTS)

Look up each Scripture reference to find the name of one or more musical instruments of praise. Then locate the instruments in the word-find puzzle.

Psalms 137:2

Exodus 39:25

Numbers 10:2

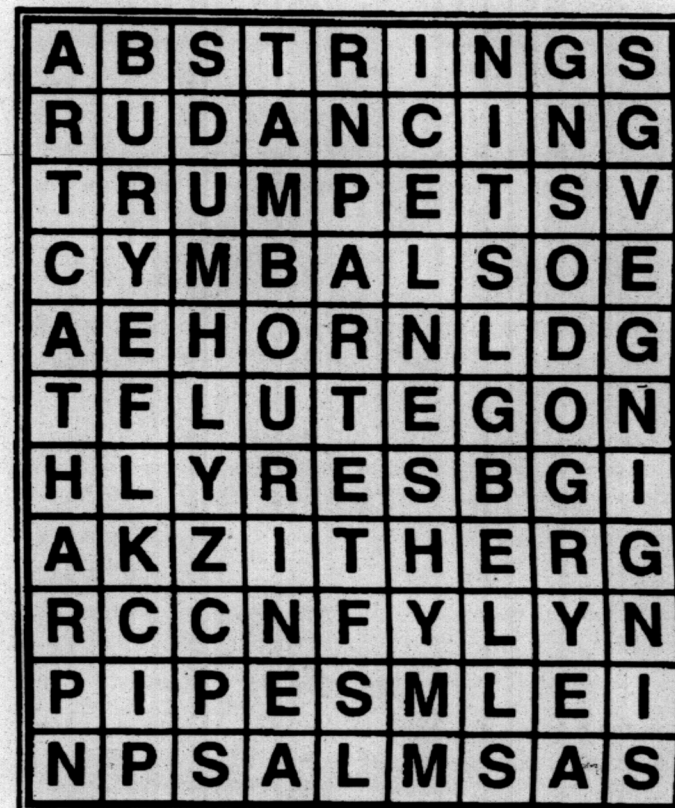
1 Chronicles 25:6

Daniel 3:5

1 Samuel 16:23

Judges 11:34

Psalms 150:3-5



Source: **Keep 'Em Singing** by Joy McKenzie & Lynn Hodges (Zondervan Publishing House, 1993). Available at your local bookstore or by calling 1-800-727-3480.

Answers: Harp, Bells, Trumpets, Cymbals, Lyres, Harp, Horn, Flute, Zither, Lyre, Harp, Pipes, Flute, Tambourine, Trumpet, Harp, Lyre, Tambourine, Dancing strings, Flute, Cymbals.



First Church, Senatobia, recently held a recognition service for its first through sixth grade GAs (top photo) and a coronation service for its Acteens (bottom photo). Emmy Jarjoura is director of the mission education groups.

Great mini-vacations: inexpensive fun adventures and summer weekend trips

Editors note: The following is reprinted from "Insights for Moms," published by Broadman & Holman Publishers, 127 Ninth Ave. N. MSN #143, Nashville, TN 37234.

Can't afford the time or money to take a vacation? Plan a day of fun with your family in your own community and still make great memories.

— Celebrate a beautiful day by declaring it "The (your name) Family Holiday." Gather the clan and go on a picnic, fly kites, and ride bikes.

— Make a trip to a local muse-

um fun for your kids by having a museum scavenger hunt. Before you go, ask the museum for exhibit information. Make a list of facts and items, and have your kids search for them. After they've located everything on the list, let them choose a prize from the museum souvenir shop.

— Turn an ordinary weekend into a mini-getaway without leaving home. Stock up on groceries and snacks; get out board games and videos; unplug the phone; and put up a sign on your front door saying you're on vacation.

— Go on a "Where will we end

up?" adventure in your car. Starting at your home, flip a coin each time you stop to see which direction you turn — heads you turn left and tails you turn right. Set a time limit and see where you end up. Stop for a treat on your way back home.

Play tourist in your own hometown. Take advantage of area attractions and current events you normally might not take time to enjoy.

— Plan a surprise weekend for your family and enjoy the pool, health club, and maid service at a local hotel. Many have inexpensive weekend packages.

On Korean peninsula . . .

Missionary counsels calm as nuclear standoff drags on

SEOUL, South Korea (BP) — Anxiety about the North Korean nuclear crisis rises the farther you get from Korea.

Until mid-June, that observation by a news magazine rang true. Japan was concerned, the United Nations was worried, and Washington issued increasingly grim warnings.

But South Koreans — the certain first targets of North Korean fire if hostilities break out — seemed to be taking it all in stride.

They almost ignored the North's threats of war if the United Nations or the United States pursue economic sanctions.

The sanctions would punish the north for its refusal to halt its nuclear program or allow full international inspections.

Is crisis over?

That attitude began to change, however, even as former U.S. President Jimmy Carter visited North Korea and later declared "the crisis is over."

As Carter held talks June 16-17 with North Korean dictator Kim Il Sung, South Koreans were lining up to buy emergency food, gas masks, and other supplies as the international

standoff intensifies.

Their government, which has long worked to prepare the public for the worst, now counsels calm.

Work goes on

So does Southern Baptist missionary J.G. Goodwin.

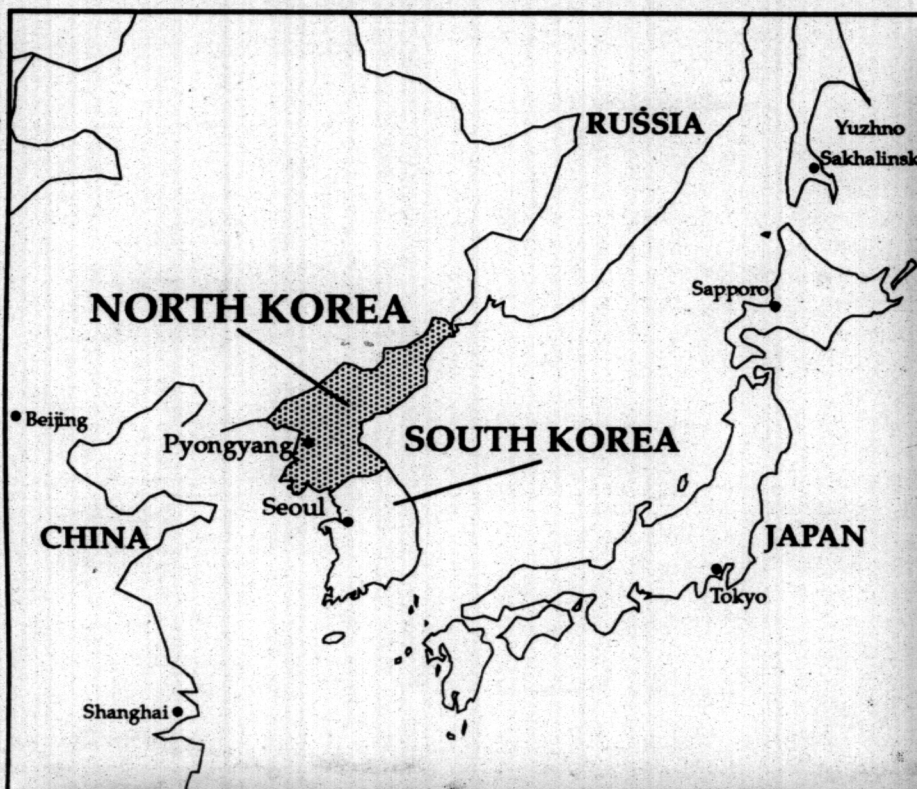
"This has been going on for 40 years," said Goodwin, who

has served in South Korea almost that long.

"I don't look for war myself. We've been here 38 years and this is the kind of tension that's been present, off and on, the whole time."

Years of conflict

Tension on the divided Korean peninsula ebbs and flows,



Goodwin explained.

"Sometimes it's real acute, sometimes not. There's been a state of war here for the last 40 years, but there's been no fighting.

"They never signed a peace treaty; they just signed an armistice which in effect stopped the (Korean War). That's all they did."

Goodwin, 65, of Hillsborough, N.C., and his wife June of Traveler's Rest, S.C., have performed a variety of ministries since arriving in South Korea in 1956.

Based in Seoul, he currently is administrator of the Southern Baptist mission organization, overseeing the work of 47 missionaries now in South Korea.

The latest crisis is getting a lot more attention worldwide, Goodwin acknowledged.

Missionaries anxious

Some of the younger missionaries he works with are anxious, he added — both because they haven't experienced earlier tensions and because they're get-

ting frantic calls from family members back in the United States.

Goodwin has written several letters to the missionaries urging them to stay calm.

"This nuclear thing has taken a long time to develop. It's going to take a long time to solve," he said.

"But they're still talking, and as long as they're talking and negotiating, that's all right. It might take several years to solve the matter. But talking and negotiating for years is a lot better than war of any length."

"Pray for Korea"

Korean Christians also are praying in their churches for a resolution to the crisis.

"They're concerned, but they're not overly concerned to the extent that a lot of Americans are," said the missionary.

"When people call from the United States all upset and ask what they can do, I say 'Pray for Korea.'"

Cochran resolution aims to shield religion practice from government abuse

WASHINGTON (ABP) — A U.S. senator introduced a Senate resolution June 14 calling for a constitutional amendment to restore the free exercise of religion.

Sen. Thad Cochran, R-Miss., said the resolution is necessary to counter a "politically correct negative view" of those who openly practice their faith.

The first 16 words of the Bill of Rights guarantees religious freedom, but Cochran said some decisions by the nation's Supreme Court have undercut that protection. He pointed to the 1960s school prayer decisions and the 1990 *Oregon vs. Smith* decision that virtually abandoned a high level of protection for religious practice.

In November, President Clinton signed the Religious Freedom

Restoration Act that restores the protection lost in the Smith case. Cochran said RFRA is only "a partial solution" to the anti-religion sentiments of American society.

The proposed amendment states: "The right of citizens of the United States to the free exercise of religion shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state."

James Dunn, executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee, which led the effort behind RFRA's passage, said, "Sen. Cochran's unnecessary amendment simply adds another layer to the confusion."

Native Mississippian relates life story to emphasize need to overcome hurts

ORLANDO, Fla. (BP) — A pastor's wife who said she was reared in the home of an alcoholic father and entered her marriage with many insecurities from her past urged Southern Baptist church leaders and their spouses to seek help when painful past issues or other struggles of life overwhelm them.

Leigh Lowery, wife of Fred Lowery, pastor of First Church, Bossier City, La., told the group of more than 1,500 attending a June 13 luncheon preceding the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention that she wanted to be a perfect wife, mother, and pastor's wife and yet found that the imperfections of her past and other conflicts in her life colored her view of her self-worth.

"I grew up in Mississippi in an antebellum home where on the outside things looked great, but inside it was a house torn apart by alcoholism, abuse, and unfaithfulness," Lowery said at the luncheon, sponsored by Rapha, a manager of psychiatric care and substance abuse treatment from a Christian perspective in hospitals nationwide.

Lowery said in 1989 she began seeking answers for her self-worth struggles and subsequently read *Search for Significance* by Rapha founder Robert S. McGee. She said she learned that Satan

had taught her the lie that "my performance plus the opinions of others equalled my significance." She said learning that she was totally forgiven, completely accepted, and fully pleasing to God "renewed my mind."

"I exchanged an imperfect earthly father for a perfect heavenly Father," she said. "I began to understand how God loves me. When you learn to love yourself like Jesus wants, you can love others."

Alan Day, pastor of First Church, Edmond, Okla., and his son, Cheyne, a student at Oklahoma Baptist University, told the audience they sought professional help in 1992 when Cheyne as a young adult became depressed and suicidal after surrendering to the ministry.

The elder Day said that before this time, he felt he never had experienced any trial that he, his wife, the Lord, and significant others couldn't handle. "I thought I could fix everything for my kids," he said.

When he allowed himself to become vulnerable, he sought help from Rapha, and Cheyne spent 27 days in a Rapha treatment center in Houston.

Cheyne told the audience that in this setting he experienced the truth that "the love and forgiveness of Jesus was unconditional"

in spite of his difficulties.

Through the experience Cheyne worked out his own sense of calling to help others learn about this unconditional love, he said.

Jerry Vines, pastor of First Church, Jacksonville, Fla., told the audience he is thankful for Christian psychologists "who have taught us how God has put the human personality together."

He said one of the most psychologically mature things a person can do is to "get out of himself and to begin to tell others about Jesus Christ."

Bibliocipher

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ZW ZSLZ KZWOWV LZWW, G ESF, OZSL AK
YGGV; SFV OZSL VGLZ LZW DGJV JWIMAJW GX
LZWW, TML LG VG BMKLDQ, SFV LG DGNW
EWJUQ, SFV LG OSDC ZMETDQ OALZ LZQ YGV?

EAUSZ KAP: WAYZL

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to June 16's puzzle: Hosea Ten: Four.

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